



Department of Justice

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FOUR DEFENDANTS PLEAD GUILTY IN OBSCENITY CASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of Justice announced today that four defendants have pleaded guilty to obscenity and conspiracy charges based on the operation of a joint business venture that produced and sold obscene videos.

U.S. Attorney Kasey Warner for the Southern District of West Virginia, Andrew G. Oosterbaan, Chief of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Department of Justice, and Robin Dalglish, Inspector in Charge, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Pittsburgh Division, announced the guilty pleas today in criminal cases against Michael J. Corbett and Sharon E. Corbett, of Lewisburg, West Virginia, and Joseph Tanner and Randall Rogers, of Quitman, Georgia. The four were indicted by a federal grand jury on April 9, 2003, and charged with three counts of mailing obscene materials in violation of Title 18, USC Section 1461, and one count of conspiracy to mail obscene materials and conspiracy to use the Internet for the purpose of sale and distribution of obscene material, in violation of Title 18, USC Section 371.

An investigation conducted by Postal Inspector Thomas Svitek revealed the Corbetts, through their Internet website, offered for a sale a total of 53 videotapes and DVDs depicting graphic and sexually explicit scenes of defecation and urination. Tanner and Rogers, the owners and operators of Tdigital Services Inc., managed and maintained the website with knowledge of its content, and shared in the profit.

At a hearing today in U.S. District Court in Beckley, West Virginia, the Corbetts each pleaded guilty to one count of mailing obscene material. Tanner and Rogers each pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to mail obscene material and conspiracy to use the Internet for the purpose of sale and distribution of obscene material. Each count carries a maximum potential penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Additionally, the Corbetts have forfeited \$15,010 seized from their bank accounts, the domain name associated with their website, and all obscene materials and equipment used to produce or manufacture obscene materials. The Corbetts have also agreed to pay the United States \$60,000 in lieu of forfeiting their home, which was used in the sale of obscene materials. Joseph Tanner forfeited \$80,000 and all obscene materials and equipment used to produce obscene materials.

The prosecution is being handled by Trial Attorney David Szuchman and Stephanie Thacker of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section in conjunction with the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of West Virginia. Today's convictions are another important step in the Justice Department's strategy attacking the proliferation of adult obscenity. In the coming months, several more significant prosecutions are expected against major producers and purveyors of obscenity.

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